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NOTES ON CURRENT AND RECENT EVENTS.

INCREASE OF CRIME IN ENGLAND IN 1908.¹—In the introduction to the Criminal Statistics of England for 1908, Mr. J. W. Farrant, the official statistical expert says that in the year 1908 the number of persons tried for indictable offenses was 68,116, a higher number than in any previous year.

The increase in 1908 over 1907 was 11 per cent. But a comparison of crime with total population may be misleading, for there is little relation between the amount of crime and the number of children, women and aged persons who together make up three-fourths of the population. Most criminality comes from the male population within certain age limits. According to this expert, crime has increased in England very little in half a century. He sums up his remarks upon crime in 1908 as follows:

1. Crimes against the person showed an increase unimportant in amount.
2. Crimes against property, both trivial and serious, increased very largely the probable reason being distress and unemployment arising from depression of trade and labor disputes.
3. For the same reason vagrancy increased and drunkenness diminished but otherwise non-indictable offenses showed no important changes.²

RUSSIAN PRISON ADMINISTRATION.—In view of certain criticisms directed against the management of the prisons of the Russian Empire, the imperial authorities have published a denial¹ of these stories which they charge with exaggeration and misrepresentation. The essential points of this denial are that Kennan, Kropotkin, Kautzky and others are carried away by political prejudices; that the evidence adduced will not bear analysis; that in reality the Russian prison system will bear comparison with that of other civilized countries. Along with the official affirmation there is a citation of facts. Thus, the number of prisoners in Russia to every ten thousand inhabitants before the political troubles (1906) was only six, while in France it was seven and eight-tenths, in Austria ten, in Switzerland twelve, in Prussia sixteen and three-tenths, in Belgium sixteen and seven-tenths. The political disturbances naturally increased the number of prisoners, which rose from ninety-six thousand in 1903 to more than one hundred and seventy-one thousand in 1908. The cells available were not sufficient and crowding was inevitable, and with crowding, unwholesome conditions; but the government built larger prisons as rapidly as possible and the available places rose from one hundred and one thousand five hundred in 1905 to one hundred and twenty thousand, and are now sufficient. The number of sick in 1908 was seven and sixty-nine hundredths in one hundred prisoners, the mortality was 5.145, or forty-one per

¹Judicial Statistics, England and Wales, for 1908, London, 1910.

²Furnished by Arthur MacDonald.

¹"A propos des bruits sur les prétendues oppressions des détenus dans les prisons russes, démenti officiel." St. Pétersbourg. Imprimerie "Russo-Francaise" 1910. Pp. 29.

PUBLIC DEFENDERS IN CRIMINAL TRIALS.

cent of all prisoners of the year or three per cent of the daily average. It is admitted that evils exist, but not that they are serious. It is officially denied that political prisoners are tortured or in any way treated harshly. The number of suicides varied between forty and forty-four each year previous to 1906; in 1907 there were one hundred and eighteen suicides and in 1908 there were one hundred and three attempts at self-destruction.

The Russian government invites foreigners to inspect its prisons and competent men pronounce a favorable opinion; one is cited, Dr. S. J. Barrows, formerly United States Commissioner on the International Prison Commission, who visited Russia in 1907, and who is reported as saying that the places of detention in Russia are by no means inferior to others and that, in certain respects, they are superior to those of England, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

It is affirmed that the present administration is humane and is promoting improvements. Schools and libraries are furnished; prisoners are permitted to receive visits from clergymen of their choice; outdoor work is common; prisoners are given a share of their earnings; conditional liberation (the same purpose and principle as in our parole system) was introduced in 1909; societies for aiding discharged prisoners are encouraged by the government; houses of correction for young criminals are to be established; and finally, transportation to Siberia is to be abolished.

C. R. H.

REMOVAL OF PICTURES FROM THE ROGUES' GALLERY OF BOSTON.—It is announced that the police authorities of Boston, following the example of Mayor Gaynor of New York, have issued orders that hereafter prisoners must be convicted of the crimes charged against them before their photographs can be placed in the rogues' gallery. Those whose pictures are already in the rogues' gallery, but who have not been convicted, will also have their photographs removed.

NEW JOURNAL OF PHILANTHROPY AND CRIMINOLOGY.—The "Institution Quarterly" is the title of a new periodical founded and edited by Frederick Howard Wines of Springfield, Ill. In a certain sense it will be an organ of the New Illinois Board of Administration, which was recently created to take over the management of the charitable and reformatory institutions of the state and of which Mr. Wines is statistician. It will be the purpose of the Quarterly to keep the people of this and other states fully informed of the working and results of the present system of central control of the institutions mentioned. The initial number, which appeared in May, contains a comparison of the former and present systems of institutional control in Illinois and a number of brief articles on various topics of interest to sociologists and criminologists.

J. W. G.

PUBLIC DEFENDERS IN CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS.—Judge Ralph S. Latshaw of Kansas City recently declared it to be the duty of the state to employ public defenders the same as it employs public prosecutors. It should not be the aim of the prosecuting attorney, he says, to convict a man. Courts of law should be as much concerned in establishing the innocence of an accused person as in establishing his guilt.

"If I had my say about it," Judge Latshaw said, "I would divide the prosecuting attorney's office into two divisions, one to collect the evidence of a man's